



SAFETY MESSAGE



There is zero tolerance for workplace violence. It is a requirement to report any incident of violence, even threats of violence or concerns of workplace violence immediately to the management.

What Is Workplace Violence? Compiled by USDA-APHIS-CCEP <http://www.usda.gov/news/pubs/violence/wpv.htm#2a>

Workplace violence can be any act of physical violence, threats of physical violence, harassment, intimidation, or other threatening, disruptive behavior that occurs at the work site. Workplace violence can affect or involve employees, visitors, contractors, and other non-Federal employees. A number of different actions in the work environment can trigger or cause workplace violence. It may even be the result of non-work-related situations such as domestic violence or “road rage.” Workplace violence can be inflicted by an abusive employee, a manager, supervisor, co-worker, customer, family member, or even a stranger. Whatever the cause or whoever the perpetrator, workplace violence is not to be accepted or tolerated. However, there is no sure way to predict human behavior and, while there may be warning signs, there is no specific profile of a potentially dangerous individual. The best prevention comes from identifying any problems early and dealing with them. Each USDA agency has an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) in place which serves as an excellent, confidential resource available to all employees to help them identify and deal with problems.

Responsibilities

It is up to each employee to help make USDA a safe workplace for all of us. The expectation is that each employee will treat all other employees, as well as customers and potential customers of USDA’s programs, with dignity and respect. You can and should expect management to care about your safety and to provide as safe a working environment as possible by having preventive measures in place and, if necessary, by dealing immediately with threatening or potentially violent situations which occur. Because USDA programs touch the lives of so many persons, you can expect at some point in your career to encounter individuals who don’t share USDA’s core ethic of fairness, dignity, and respect. There are appropriate and effective ways to deal with such persons to avoid or minimize the damage they seek to cause, and we all need to educate ourselves on those methods.

In addition, supervisors and managers have the obligation to deal with inappropriate behavior by their employees and customers, to provide employees with information and training to employees on workplace violence, and to put effective security measures in place.

- **Employees**

- Be familiar with Department/agency policy regarding workplace violence.
- Be responsible for securing your own workplace.
- Be responsible for questioning and/or reporting strangers to supervisors.
- Be aware of any threats, physical or verbal, and/or any disruptive behavior of any individual and report such to supervisors.
- Be familiar with local procedures for dealing with workplace threats and emergencies.
- Do not confront individuals who are a threat.
- Be familiar with the resources of the Employee Assistance Program.
- **Take all threats seriously.**